

Frankfort named among top areas for new, expanding business projects

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Published 5:14 pm Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Frankfort and Franklin County have been named among the top 10 micropolitan statistical areas for new and expanding business projects in the March edition of Site Selection Magazine.

The magazine — a trade journal for site-selection consultants, companies and economic developers — ranked Frankfort as tied for 10th in the nation based on recent projects that involve a capital investment of at least \$1 million. A news release stated the magazine recognized Frankfort for six new or expanding facilities, including Buffalo Trace, Hayashi Telempu North America Corp., Topy and the Recon Group. Together, the projects represent an investment of more than \$167 million and 250 jobs.

Franklin County Judge-Executive Huston Wells noted that each of the past four years, the magazine has recognized Frankfort as one of the country's top performing micropolitan areas.

In 2016, Frankfort tied for 32nd in the nation. It was seventh in 2015. Frankfort finished tied for 41st in 2014.

"While many communities in Kentucky continue to excel at securing corporate investments, few can match the long-term track record of Franklin County," Wells said in a news release. "We maintain a great working relationship with our corporate partners and appreciate their confidence to continue to grow and invest in our community."

Frankfort Mayor Bill May said that the community is moving in the right direction and that the recent private investment wouldn't be possible without a good working relationship among city and county leaders as well as local agencies.

Frankfort wasn't the only Kentucky community in the national top 10. Other micropolitan statistical areas — defined as one or more adjacent counties with one urban core area of 10,000 to 50,000 people and adjacent territory with a high degree of social and economic integration — in Kentucky that ranked in the top 10 included were Richmond and Berea, Bardstown and Danville. Of those, Danville and Bardstown were among several communities tied with Frankfort at 10.

Frankfort's 2017 private investment figure — \$167 million — is five times the previous year and many times the 2015 private investment amount of \$7.6 million, a news release said.

Kentucky Capital Development Corp President and CEO Terri Bradshaw said the community will experience a "phenomenal" socioeconomic impact from the private business investment. She said KCDC has a strong business retention and expansion program that provides support to local businesses, too.

In total, 12 cities from Kentucky landed in the top 100 micropolitan areas in the country, placing the commonwealth third, behind Ohio and Georgia.

2017 TOP MICROPOLITANS

by Number of Projects

Micropolitan	Projects	Micropolitan	Projects	Micropolitan	Projects
1 Findlay, Ohio	21	T41 Calhoun, Ga.	3	T64 Meridian, Miss.	2
2 Batavia, N.Y.	17	T41 Effingham, Ill.	3	T64 Sedalia, Mo.	2
3 Wooster, Ohio	15	T41 Rochelle, Ill.	3	T64 Beatrice, Neb.	2
4 Shelby, N.C.	10	T41 Auburn, Ind.	3	T64 Fremont, Neb.	2
T5 Cullman, Ala.	9	T41 Marion, Ind.	3	T64 Hastings, Neb.	2
T5 Richmond-Berea, Ky.	9	T41 New Castle, Ind.	3	T64 Kearney, Neb.	2
T7 Ashland, Ohio	8	T41 Warsaw, Ind.	3	T64 Scottsbluff, Neb.	2
T7 Manitowoc, Wis.	8	T41 Murray, Ky.	3	T64 Auburn, N.Y.	2
9 Jefferson, Ga.	7	T41 Somerset, Ky.	3	T64 Jamestown-Dunkirk-Fredonia, N.Y.	2
T10 Cedartown, Ga.	6	T41 Ludington, Mich.	3	T64 Plattsburgh, N.Y.	2
T10 Angola, Ind.	6	T41 Norfolk, Neb.	3	T64 Dunn, N.C.	2
T10 Bardstown, Ky.	6	T41 Ogdensburg-Massena, N.Y.	3	T64 Henderson, N.C.	2
T10 Danville, Ky.	6	T41 Marion, N.C.	3	T64 Laurinburg, N.C.	2
T10 Frankfort, Ky.	6	T41 Bellefontaine, Ohio	3	T64 Pinehurst-Southern Pines, N.C.	2
T10 Tupelo, Miss.	6	T41 Greenville, Ohio	3	T64 Jamestown, N.D.	2
T10 Kinston, N.C.	6	T41 Marion, Ohio	3	T64 Cambridge, Ohio	2
T10 Tiffin, Ohio	6	T41 Sandusky, Ohio	3	T64 Portsmouth, Ohio	2
T18 Talladega-Sylacauga, Ala.	5	T41 Urbana, Ohio	3	T64 Van Wert, Ohio	2
T18 McPherson, Kan.	5	T41 Wapakoneta, Ohio	3	T64 Wilmington, Ohio	2
T18 Glasgow, Ky.	5	T41 Seneca, S.C.	3	T64 Enid, Okla.	2
T18 Lumberton, N.C.	5	T41 Danville, Va.	3	T64 Muskogee, Okla.	2
T18 Roanoke Rapids, N.C.	5	T64 El Dorado, Ark.	2	T64 Huntingdon, Pa.	2
T18 Ashtabula, Ohio	5	T64 Truckee-Grass Valley, Calif.	2	T64 Indiana, Pa.	2
T18 Celina, Ohio	5	T64 Cordele, Ga.	2	T64 Lewisburg, Pa.	2
T18 Sidney, Ohio	5	T64 Dublin, Ga.	2	T64 Somerset, Pa.	2
T18 Cookeville, Tenn.	5	T64 Fitzgerald, Ga.	2	T64 Sunbury, Pa.	2
T18 Watertown-Fort Atkinson, Wis.	5	T64 Moultrie, Ga.	2	T64 Gaffney, S.C.	2
T28 Americus, Ga.	4	T64 Statesboro, Ga.	2	T64 Greenwood, S.C.	2
T28 Douglas, Ga.	4	T64 Thomaston, Ga.	2	T64 Dayton, Tenn.	2
T28 Toccoa, Ga.	4	T64 Thomasville, Ga.	2	T64 Greeneville, Tenn.	2
T28 Ottawa-Peru, Ill.	4	T64 Tifton, Ga.	2	T64 Lawrenceburg, Tenn.	2
T28 London, Ky.	4	T64 Vidalia, Ga.	2	T64 Lewisburg, Tenn.	2
T28 Paducah, Ky.-Ill.	4	T64 Burley, Idaho	2	T64 Newport, Tenn.	2
T28 Hillsdale, Mich.	4	T64 Wabash, Ind.	2	T64 Brenham, Texas	2
T28 Sanford, N.C.	4	T64 Newton, Iowa	2	T64 Gainesville, Texas	2
T28 Wilson, N.C.	4	T64 Coffeyville, Kan.	2	T64 Paris, Texas	2
T28 Norwalk, Ohio	4	T64 Madisonville, Ky.	2	T64 Whitewater-Elkhorn, Wis.	2
T28 Pottsville, Pa.	4	T64 Maysville, Ky.	2	T64 Laramie, Wyo.	2
T28 Union City, Tenn.-Ky.	4	T64 DeRidder, La.	2	T64 Sheridan, Wyo.	2
T28 Martinsville, Va.	4	T64 Owosso, Mich.	2		
T41 Batesville, Ark.	3	T64 Columbus, Miss.	2		
T41 Malvern, Ark.	3	T64 Greenwood, Miss.	2		

Source: Conway Projects Database

2017 TOP STATES

By Most Top Micropolitan Areas

Rank	State	Count	Projects
1	Ohio	18	95
2	Georgia	15	46
3	Kentucky	12	55
4	North Carolina	11	45
5	Tennessee	7	20
T6	Pennsylvania	6	14
T6	Nebraska	6	13
T6	Indiana	6	20
9	New York	5	26
T10	Illinois	4	14
T10	Mississippi	4	12

Source: Conway Projects Database

Among Findlay's top wins of 2017 was a \$44-million investment by New Jersey-based Campbell Soup Company, which has broken ground on a 740,000-sq.-ft. (68,748-sq.-m.) distribution center that will employ 200 people on the city's north end. The site leverages Findlay's proximity to Interstate 75 and CSX's North Baltimore railyard. Campbell officials say the Findlay facility, the company's third in northwest Ohio, will serve as the company's future Midwest distribution hub. (Nearby Napoleon also will soon grow busier, as the company diverts manufacturing from a Canadian plant it chose in January to shut down.)

"What's really exciting is that this is central to their plans for e-commerce," says Mayle of Findlay's new distribution center. "The consumer's always gone to the grocery store to get their food. In the future that's going to change, where we're going to buy it on our phone and the food will find us. So, they're making this investment for the long term."

Sweden's Autoliv, like Campbell's, is making a major investment in Findlay that is likely to